CITY OF AUBURN

Planning Commission – Staff Report
Meeting Date: February 15, 2011

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ITEM NO. IV-A

ITEM IV-A: SITE ACCESS DISCUSSION FOR THE BALTIMORE RAVINE SPECIFIC PLAN (BRSP) AND STUDY AREA PROJECT

REQUEST: The Planning Commission will review and consider access alternatives for the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan and Study Area Project. The Planning Commission will accept public comment relating to the access alternatives and will provide a recommendation to the Auburn City Council as to which option would be the better alternative for access into the BRSP Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS

City Staff recommend that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

1. Upon review and comparison of Alternative 4 and Alternative 5, the Auburn Planning Commission recommends Alternative 4 to the Auburn City Council; and

2. Upon review and comparison of Alternative 4, Alternative 5, and Herdal Drive, the Auburn Planning Commission recommends Herdal Drive to the Auburn City Council.

BACKGROUND

The Auburn City Council considered the Baltimore Ravine Specific Plan (BRSP) and Study Area Project (Project) at its meeting on January 13, 2011. The City Council passed a motion directing the Planning Commission to review two access alternatives for the BRSP project and to recommend one of the two alternatives for Council consideration. The first option (Alternative #4) is the Pacific Street Extension located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road, opposite Pacific Street. The second option (Alternative #5) is also located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road approximately 750' south of the Auburn Folsom Road/Pacific Street intersection.

The Auburn Planning Commission met on February 1, 2011, reviewed the information that Staff proposed to provide to the Commission for their meeting on February 15, 2011, and took comment from the public. The Planning Commission directed staff to address several issues and questions (see below) in addition to the information identified in their February 1st staff report. The Commission also directed Staff to provide similar information for the Herdal Drive access, for comparison purposes, and directed Staff to provide its recommendation comparing Alternatives 4 and 5, as well as a recommendation comparing Alternatives 4, 5, and the Herdal Drive access. This issues identified by the Planning Commission included:

- Is a new watershed affected by drainage from Alternative 4 or Alternative 5 that wasn't affected by the project previously?

- Fire Department –
    - Provide response times for Alternative 4 and Alternative 5.
    - Provide response times for the Herdal Drive access option.
    - How do the options comply with the requirements of NFPA 1700?
- Police Department – Provide response times for Alternative 4 and Alternative 5. Also, address the issue of attractive nuisances.
- Aesthetics – Address views of the bridges from Auburn Folsom Road for Alt #4 and Alt #5. Provide cross sections and photo simulations.
- Identify the "net footprint impact" of the options. Quantify the acreage disturbed, and any features affected by, the footprint of the alternatives.
- Provide road profiles for each alignment.
- Identify representative roadways in Auburn and their associated slopes. Identify roadway sections in Auburn with 15% slopes.
- When comparisons are made, relate the comparisons to common things (i.e. volume of earth moved to the number of dump trucks needed; area compared to the size of a football field).
- Have the City Attorney address the possible legal implications for the City if the project was approved with one of the new access alternatives instead of the Herdal access (i.e. would the City be exposed to litigation), based on the applicant's information regarding his existing access rights on Herdal Drive.
- Have the City Attorney address whether or not the City can use eminent domain to acquire the right-of-way associated with the new options if the access on Herdal is already available.

The Planning Commission hearing on February 15, 2011 will only consider access alternatives for the BRSP. The City Council tabled further discussion on the BRSP Project at their January 13, 2011 hearing until such time as the Planning Commission rendered its recommendation on the access options. The City Council will take up discussion on the access issues, and the project, at a later date following the Commission's review and recommendation. The tentative date for the City Council's review is February 28, 2011, and Public Notice of the Council hearing will be provided.

DESCRIPTION OF ACCESS ALTERNATIVES UNDER REVIEW

The two access alternatives that the City Council remanded back to the Planning Commission for review and recommendation were Alternatives #4 and #5 on the Site Access Alternatives map (see Attachment 1) presented with the March 26, 2010 access memorandum (Tab R of the September 21, 2010 staff report). Alternative #4 is located opposite Pacific Street, west of Auburn Folsom Road. Alternative #5 is also located on the west side of Auburn Folsom Road, roughly 750' south of the Pacific Street intersection. Subsequent to Council's direction on January 13th, the applicant has provided a more detailed site access plan illustrating the two

options (see Exhibit A). This plan has been refined to provide additional detail regarding topography, the road alignments, and grading and is described briefly below.

Pacific Street Extension (Alternative #4): With Alternative #4, Pacific Street would be extended from Auburn-Folsom Road west over the UP rail line with the construction of a new bridge. The alignment will continue southwest over property currently owned by the Auburn Recreation District, and then further to the southwest across property owned by the Sipe family to the northeast corner of the BRSP area. The overall length of this option from Auburn Folsom Road into the BRSP would be 4,900 feet long. In order to bridge the UPRR tracks immediately west of Auburn Folsom Road, a 22-foot high roadway embankment would be required. The bridge spanning the rails line would be approximately 250 feet long.

Rail line crossing south of Pacific Street (Alternative #5): This option would provide a connection to Auburn-Folsom Road approximately 750-feet south of Pacific Street, near the existing Boardman canal. The total roadway length for this option would also be approximately 4,900 feet. Significant fill will be required to provide adequate clearance, resulting in roughly 12-foot tall embankments and a bridge span of approximately 100 feet. A 90-degree elbow would be required on the west side of the rail line to travel around the hill on ARD and Sipe property. The alignment would then move through the ravines and the eastern portion of the BRSP on the same alignment as the Pacific Street option above.

Herdal Drive extension: Herdal Drive currently terminates roughly 825' west of Auburn Folsom Road, just west of Quinn Way. The Herdal Drive access would extend Herdal Drive roughly 635' west to the UPRR right-of-way, and then across the 400' wide UPRR right-of-way to the Project site. The total length of the new roadway extension is roughly 1,135', resulting in a total road length from Auburn Folsom Road of approximately 1,860'. The Herdal Drive access would utilize the existing 60-foot wide City-owned right-of-way. This access would include a new bridge over the rail line at Bloomer Cut. A relatively short bridge span would be required (±70-feet) to clear the existing Bloomer Cut, but it would provide sufficient clearance for UPRR to accommodate the addition of a second track should UPRR decide to construct a second line through the cut in the future.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Provided below is a review by City Staff (including Community Development, Fire, Police, and Public Works) of the information and issues associated with Alternatives #4 and #5. Where appropriate, Staff also provided comparative information for the Herdal Drive access:

1. Topographic and slope maps – The alignment of Alternatives 4 and 5 have been superimposed on topographic maps to illustrate the different topographic constraints of each option. Exhibit A illustrates the road alignments on an aerial topographic map and color-codes the slope of the roads. Road grades 6% and less are pink, 6%-10% are fuchsia, and 10%-15% are purple. Where the access routes diverge, the plan illustrates that both Alternatives include considerable portions of roadway with slopes over 10%.

   The areas shown in gray illustrate the cut and fill necessary for the roadway alignments. As noted in the attached memo by the project engineer (Attachment 2), the area impacted by

cut and fill slopes would be over 250' wide with fills of to 80' deep and cuts up to 50' tall. The grading impacts are similar as the Alternatives utilize the same alignment for the majority of the route, with the exception of where they diverge over the UPRR and ARD properties. As shown in Exhibit A, Alternative 4 would likely result in the need for greater fill as compared to Alternative 5.

Exhibit B superimposes the road alignments on a colored slope map which covers the Project area. Exhibit C is a localized version highlighting the area covered by the access alternatives. Exhibits B and C illustrate slopes in, and adjacent to, the Project area and identify where the proposed road alignment(s) would traverse natural slopes that are in excess of 30% (red areas).

2. Fire Department review - The attached memo from the Fire Chief (Attachment 3) reviews fire safety and emergency response issues, including emergency response times, associated with Alternatives 4 and 5, as well as the Herdal Drive extension. The Fire Chief's analysis concluded that neither Alternative is satisfactory as they both present a higher risk to both the public and firefighting personnel due to the length of the access and its circuitous path, leading to higher response times, and its route through undeveloped and heavily vegetated terrain. In addition, the addition of a new signal for Alternative 5 would create additional delays on Auburn Folsom Road.

   In a comparison of Alternatives 4 and 5, the Chief selected Alternative 4 as it presented fewer impacts. When comparing Alternatives 4, 5 and the Herdal Drive access, the Chief selected the Herdal access as the recommended access due to direct access, reasonable response times, access through existing developed areas, and no inhibitors such as road grades and curves.

3. Police Department review – The attached memo from the Police Chief (Attachment 4) reviews public safety issues from the police department as they relate to Alternative 4 and Alternative 5, as well as the Herdal Drive extension. The Police Chief identified the public safety issues that the police department has historically dealt with for the project area, and noted that opening up the area with either Alternative increases potential access onto private land and UPRR property, increasing possibilities for illegal camping and campfires, exposure to human waste, illegal dumping, safety conflicts with the UP rail lines, and enticement for skateboarders.

   The Police Chief recommends avoiding access by either Alternative 4 or 5, and recommends Herdal Drive as the access route for the project as it provides more direct access, minimizes construction in the UPRR, and reduces the likelihood of additional trespassing and criminal activity.

4. Alignment, roadway, and bridge design information – The memo provided by the Project Engineer (Attachment 2) describes some of the characteristics associated with Alternatives 4 and 5. Additional information requested by the Commission is provided below:

   a. **Net Footprint Impact** - The Commission requested information identifying how much area would be disturbed for the two Alternatives and the Herdal access.

- **Alternative 4** - The footprint of the area disturbed for the full alignment of Alternative 4 is ±14 acres; this would equate to roughly 14 football fields. Several tall fill slopes (one location at 80-foot high and several locations at 50 to 60 feet high) would be created and approximately 1,600 LF (linear feet) of natural drainage channels would be disturbed.

- **Alternative 5** - The footprint of the area disturbed for the full alignment of Alternative 5 is ±13 acres. This would equate to roughly 13 football fields. The size of fill slopes and the amount of natural drainage channel disturbed by Alterative 5 would be similar to Alternative 4.

- **Herdal Drive Access** - The footprint of the area disturbed for the full alignment of Herdal Drive is ±1.5 acres, or roughly 1.5 football fields. The Herdal access has no significant fills and would not disturb any natural drainages.

b. **Road Profiles** – Road profiles are provided for Alternative 4 (Exhibit D), Alternative 5 (Exhibit E) and the Herdal access (Exhibit F).

- **Alternative 4** - Alternative 4 has a total length of ±4,900 LF through steep terrain (i.e. nearly 2,000 LF traverses natural ground that exceeds 30% slope). The roadway profile includes over 1,000 LF of 10%-15% grades; a 15% roadway grade occurring on a tight radius curve at one location, and a 250-foot bridge span over the UP rail line.

- **Alternative 5** - Alternative 5 also has a total length of ±4,900 LF through steep terrain, with nearly 2,000 LF traversing natural ground that exceeds 30% slope. The roadway profile includes over 1,000 LF of 10%-15% grades; a 15% roadway grade occurring on a tight radius curve at two locations; a 90-degree bend within the UPRR right-of-way; and a 100-foot bridge span over the UP rail line.

- **Herdal Drive Access** – The Herdal Drive access has a total length of ±1,000 LF through flat to moderate terrain. The roadway profile has a roadway slope of 3%-4% for the majority of its length, a maximum slope of 6% for roughly 100'-150', and a 70-foot bridge span over the UP rail line.

As noted in the memo from the City Engineer (Attachment 5), street grades at/near 15% have been provided (within subdivisions) on short stretches of roadway. In comparison, the grade for Auburn Folsom Road, between Indian Hill and the entry to the Vintage Oaks subdivision, is 6%-7%. Also, the grade on Nevada Street near the Regal Cinemas is roughly 6%, with the entry to the Nevada Street Office project at 15%.

5. Right-of-way acquisition and eminent domain –

The City does not currently own the right-of-way required for Alternatives 4 or Alternative 5. The alignments for both alternatives cross portions of Auburn Recreation District

property at the Auburn Rec Park, as well as property owned by the Sipe family (Exhibit A). The amount of area affected by both alternatives is roughly the same. The ARD area affected is roughly 0.5 acres, while the amount of the Sipe property affected is ±4.5 acres total, with roughly 2.5 acres directly impacted by the roadway and another 2.0 acres likely rendered inaccessible.

The Sipe family has indicated that they do not intend to sell the necessary right of way for the Alternatives being considered. It is unknown at this time what position ARD would take regarding any necessary right-of-way acquisition through the Rec Park. Eminent domain would be required in order to secure any required right-of-way if there was not a willing seller.

In response to questions posed by the Planning Commission on February 1, 2011, the City Attorney provided the Planning Commission with privileged information relating to the use of eminent domain as well as addressing questions about access via Herdal Drive.

6. Intersection improvements – The following improvements would be needed on Auburn-Folsom Road in association with the alternatives under consideration. See also the memo from the City Engineer (Attachment 5):

   - **Alternative 4** – The existing Auburn Folsom/Pacific Street intersection would be converted from a three-way to a four-way intersection. The existing improvements on the west side of Auburn Folsom road would be modified for the fourth leg. The existing traffic signal would also need to be modified.

   - **Alternative 5** – A new three-leg intersection would be required on Auburn Folsom Road roughly 750' south of the Pacific Street signal. The existing improvements on the west side of Auburn Folsom road would be modified for this access and traffic signals would be placed on all three legs.

   - **Herdal Drive access** – No new intersections or signals are required, though based on the existing CEQA analysis, minor striping would be required at the Auburn Folsom/Herdal and Auburn Folsom/Maidu intersections to address potential traffic impacts.

7. Infrastructure and services information – Identified below are some of the issues and impacts associated with infrastructure and services for each option:

   - **Alternative 4** – This option would affect an existing 115kV electrical line owned by PG&E. The proposed alignment conflicts with an existing service pole and easement for the electrical line. This will necessitate, at a minimum, the relocation of the existing service pole, or perhaps the entire line in the area of the conflict. New services would be located in the road right-of-way, such as water, electric, and cable. Drainage culverts would be provided where the new road crosses existing drainage swales. Storm drainage would be collected by drain inlets in the street and discharged to the drainage swales.

- **Alternative 5** – This alternative may also affect the 115kV electrical line referenced above. It is possible that the line may not have proper clearance from road grade to the lowest line. This may necessitate a modification to the line (e.g. the line may need to be raised for proper clearance) or the relocation of the entire service. Services and storm drain improvements would be provided consistent with Alternative #4 above.

- **Herdal Drive access** – The Herdal extension would not impact or displace any existing services or improvements. Services being extended to the Project (i.e. water; electricity; gas) as well as standard storm drain improvements, would be provided within the Herdal right-of-way.

8. Street lights – Refer to the Public Works Department memorandum provided as Attachment 4.

9. Maintenance – Refer to the Public Works Department memorandum provided as Attachment 4.

10. Resource issues –

As discussed below, Alternatives 4 and 5 would have similar effects on natural resources and the environment, because the length and location of each road and the area to be disturbed would be similar. The following discussion is based on information available at this time. A more detailed analysis would need to be prepared to refine this evaluation and identify significant impacts, if any, pursuant to CEQA (see Item 12 below).

a. **Biological resources:** Each alternative would extend a road through an otherwise undeveloped area for approximately 4,900 feet, resulting in the disturbance of approximately 13-14 acres, including 12-13 acres of woodland. Both alternatives would require fill and culverts at multiple locations, impeding or cutting off wildlife travel through the ravines and connections to the railroad corridor, which can provide a migration corridor for wildlife. Wildlife using the undeveloped land on either side of the roadway would be vulnerable to vehicles when crossing the road.

It is not known at this time if any special-status plant or animal species are present along the alternative alignments, because no surveys have been conducted. At a minimum, trees would need to be removed and nesting raptors and other birds could be disturbed by construction activities. Jurisdictional wetlands, if any are present, would be confined to the bottom of the drainages.

The Herdal Drive extension would disturb approximately 1.5 acres of land, of which approximately 0.5 acre would be woodland. Biological surveys of the Herdal Drive extension indicate that no habitat for special-status plants or animals is present, except for nesting trees. No drainages would be filled by the Herdal Drive extension, and the extension would not interfere with wildlife access to migration corridors. Because the Herdal Drive extension is in an area that is already developed, wildlife would be less vulnerable to traffic.

In summary, the impacts on biological resources would be the same under Alternative 4 or 5. The impacts of the Herdal Drive extension would be less severe than either alternative access.

b. **Cultural resources:** The plan area and vicinity are known to contain prehistoric (Native American) and historic resources. Surveys would be needed to determine what, if any, cultural resources are located within the alignments of Alternatives 4 and 5. The potential for disturbance under each alternative would be the same, because the acreage to be disturbed would be similar.

The Herdal Drive extension was surveyed for cultural resources and none were found. There is the potential for unobserved subsurface resources to be present that could be disturbed during construction. This potential is far smaller for the Herdal Drive extension than either Alternative 4 or 5 due to the area that would be disturbed by construction (approximately 1.5 acres for the Herdal Drive extension compared to 13-14 acres for Alternatives 4 and 5).

Under Alternatives 4 and 5, there would be no bridge over Bloomer Cut, a historically significant resource. The Herdal Drive extension would include a 70-foot long bridge over Bloomer Cut, but the bridge would not touch the cut, and would not alter its historic significance.

In summary, the impacts on cultural resources would be similar under Alternatives 4 and 5. The potential impacts on archaeological resources would be less severe under the Herdal Drive extension, because less ground would be disturbed. The impacts on historic resources would be more severe under the Herdal Drive extension, because a bridge would be built across Bloomer Cut. However, this impact would not be considered significant under CEQA.

c. **Hydrology and Water Quality:** Both Alternatives 4 and 5 would cross two drainages, one of which would be otherwise unaffected by the BRSP project (the other would receive some runoff from development of Parcel 11 with low density residential development). Culverts would be installed under the roadways where they cross these drainages. Stormwater runoff would flow into drain inlets and then discharge into drainage swales. As with other BRSP streets, measures would be used to ensure that the quality of the stormwater did not degrade water quality in the ravines or downstream.

The Herdal Drive extension would not cross any drainages. Like Alternatives 4 and 5, runoff from the roadway would be collected in storm drains and directed to the project's drainage system. Measures would be incorporated into the drainage system to protect water quality.

One benefit of the Herdal Drive extension would be to capture runoff from the right-of-way and homes to the north and direct it to the project's drainage system. Currently, runoff from these areas sometimes seeps around house foundations for

some of the houses on the south side of the Herdal extension. If the Herdal Drive extension is constructed, it would help to improve this drainage issue.

In summary, the impacts on hydrology and water quality would be the same under Alternatives 4 and 5. The impact would be less severe under the Herdal Drive extension because it would not affect two drainages and would improve local drainage conditions.

d. **Visual Quality:** The embankments, abutments and bridges for both Alternatives 4 and 5 would be visible from Auburn-Folsom Road. The road and associated improvements would also be visible from the ARD Recreation Park and some residences in the Knollwood and Awali neighborhoods to the north and northwest.

Attachments 6 and 7 provide conceptual views of Alternatives 4 and 5, respectively, from Auburn Folsom Road looking north. The photo was taken on Auburn Folsom Road roughly 1225' south of the Pacific Street intersection. With Alternative 4 (Attachment 6), the abutments and bridge would appear further in the background, and would extend from the intersection at Pacific Street westward and disappear behind the hill near the common property line between ARD and the Sipe property (to the left). The height of the fill slope for the bridge clearance over the UP rail line would be ±22'. Under Alternative 5, the improvements would appear closer in the foreground and extend from Auburn Folsom Road west over the rail line to the hill, before turning right and wrapping around the hill as mentioned above. The fill slope required for bridge clearance above the UP rail line with Alternative 5 is ±12'.

The Herdal Drive extension would place soundwalls along the backyards of existing residences on either side of the right-of-way. The views for residents to the south would generally change from 6-foot wooden fences to a 7-foot masonry wall. The properties to the north would experience more substantial changes, as most of the backyards currently have uninterrupted views of the undeveloped right-of-way, and in some cases, the undeveloped area within the railroad right-of-way. Under the proposed project, a 7-foot to 8-foot tall masonry wall would be constructed along the backyards to the north, which would restrict views beyond the property line.

In summary, the visual impacts of Alternatives 4 and 5 would be similar because the embankment and bridges would both be visible from Auburn-Folsom Road and surrounding areas. The visual impact of the Herdal Drive extension would generally be less severe than either Alternative 4 or 5 because it would not be visible from a public road or park, though the impact would be more severe for those residents on the north side of the extension because their current views would be replaced by a 7'-8' tall masonry wall.

e. **Noise:** Both Alternative 4 and Alternative 5 would introduce a new source of noise for the residences to the northwest of the project site (e.g., Sipes and Shackner). Currently, the nearest major sources of traffic noise for these residences are Auburn-Folsom Road to the east and Interstate 80 to the west. The Sipe residences would be the closest to the alternative alignments at a distance of roughly 500 feet. At this

distance, the traffic noise levels for both alternatives would not be expected to exceed the City's standard for traffic noise in residential areas; however, project traffic would create a noticeable change in noise levels for these residences, and possibly for residents farther to the north and northwest. The exact change would depend on the amount of traffic using the road, topography and other factors. Soundwalls and/or rubberized asphalt could be required to ensure that the noise increases are mitigated.

The Herdal Drive extension would introduce a substantial new source of noise into the Vista del Valle subdivision. The soundwalls proposed for the Herdal Drive extension would ensure that noise levels are acceptable for Plan Area 1. For the full BRSP, additional mitigation would be required, specifically the application of rubberized asphalt or similar materials along the length of Herdal Drive from the UPRR right-of-way to Auburn-Folsom Road.

In summary, the noise impacts for Alternatives 4 and 5 would be similar. The noise impacts relative to the Herdal Drive extension would depend on the traffic distribution patterns for the access alternatives.

f. **Land Use:** Both alternatives would require acquisition of property outside of the project area. The roadway alignment would cross property owned by the Auburn Recreation District and the Sipe family. If these property owners elect not to sell their property to the BRSP project applicant, then the City would be compelled to acquire the alignment by eminent domain (see discussion above).

Both alignments would likely alter the Specific Plan as proposed, because primary access to the plan area would change and access to Parcel 11, which is planned to have 11 low-density residential uses, may not be possible given the configuration of the alternative accesses. With the Herdal Drive extension, access could be provided to Parcel 11.

The Herdal Drive extension would not require any right-of-way acquisition, because the City already owns the right-of-way. The applicant also has an existing easement over the Herdal Drive alignment providing access to the Project area.

11. Costs – The Applicant and Project engineer have identified a number of issues affecting costs for both Alternatives 4 and 5 (see below). As both Alternatives are preliminary in nature, it is not possible to quantify specific costs, though these alternatives could easily exceed $15-$20 million. Given that Alternative 5 involves less earthwork and has a shorter bridge, it is reasonable to assume that Alternative 5 would cost less than Alternative 4.

a. Right-of-way acquisition. Eminent domain would be required without a willing seller. Costs would be incurred for land acquisition, processing, and legal fees.

b. The overall road length for Alternatives 4 and 5 is 4-5 times longer than the Herdal access, therefore costs for construction of the road (i.e. excluding fill), would be 4-5 times the cost of the Herdal extension.

c. The length of the bridge span for Alternative 5 is 1.5 times the length of the Herdal bridge, while the bridge for Alternative 4 is 3-4 times longer. The cost of bridges per foot roughly doubles for just the structure at these kinds of lengths as compared to the shorter span for the Herdal bridge.

d. Alternatives 4 and 5 would require ±165,000 and ±210,000 cubic yards of fill, respectively. The source(s) for such an amount of fill is unknown, and the cost varies significantly by distance. Costs may also be incurred to secure rights-of-access to place the fill.

e. Based on the amount of fill required for Alternatives 4 and 5, roughly 12,000 and 15,000 truck transfers, respectively, would be required to transport the necessary fill for these options.

f. Both Alternatives result in long bridge spans and fill in the UPRR right-of-way. Construction in the UP right-of-way is subject to a daily charge. The longer and more complicated the fill and improvements placed in the right-of-way, the greater the cost.

g. Each of these unknowns represents a variable that will affect other costs. For example, depending on the route for the trucks to place the fill, the length of that route will increase or decrease the costs accordingly

The Project engineer has more specific information regarding costs associated with the Herdal Drive access. Based on his estimates, costs for the Herdal Drive extension are likely to range from $1.7-2.0 million.

12. CEQA implications – In order to adopt Alternative 4 and/or Alternative 5, additional CEQA review would be required. The extent of the review would depend on the severity of impacts, which would be determined through additional studies identified below.

The EIR for the BRSP and Study Area Project briefly addresses alternatives to the Herdal Drive extension, but dismissed the various alternatives from full analysis, because they would not achieve project objectives and/or could be expected to have more severe impacts than the Herdal Drive extension. In order for the City to adopt access Alternative 4 or 5, the potential impacts would need to be analyzed at a level of detail commensurate with the project-specific analysis provided in the EIR for the proposed BRSP. If the significant impacts identified in the various studies were already addressed in the BRSP and Study Area Project EIR, and the severity of the impacts would not increase substantially as the result of the alternative access, then the City could prepare an Addendum to the EIR, revise the Findings of Fact as necessary, and take action on the project. CEQA does require public circulation of an Addendum, but it would be part of the Administrative Record for the project.

If the analysis found that there could be one or more significant impacts that were not addressed in the EIR, if new mitigation measures were required and/or if the severity of significant impacts identified in the EIR could be substantially more severe, the City would need to prepare a Supplemental EIR pursuant to Section 15163 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Supplement would need to be circulated for public and agency review for 45 days, and

responses to any comments would need to be drafted. The Findings of Fact would then be revised, and the City could take action on the project with the alternative alignment.

In order to determine what the significant impacts of the alternative access would be, the following studies would be prepared. Similar studies have already been conducted for the BRSP, which includes the Herdal Drive extension.

- Biological Resources Survey
- Special-status species surveys, if the Biological Resource Survey identifies potential habitat
- Estimate of the number of trees to be removed
- Cultural Resource Survey
- Traffic Noise Study
- Traffic Analysis

The traffic analysis would need to address the intersection of the alternative(s) and Auburn-Folsom Road at a minimum. The study may also need to revise the analysis of other roadways and intersections evaluated in the BRSP and Study Area EIR if the trip distribution would change substantially. For example, under the full BRSP, approximately 60 percent of project trips are assumed to use the Herdal Drive access point. If Alternative 4 or 5 is adopted, it may be more convenient for some of these vehicle trips to use the Werner Road access. If the distribution changed in this way, impacts at Auburn-Folsom Road intersections may be reduced, while impacts along Werner and Ophir Road could increase.

Once the above studies were completed, the City would review all of the impacts associated with the alternative access, and determine whether there are new or substantially more severe impacts. This determination would then lead to the preparation of either an Addendum or a Supplemental EIR, as discussed above.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Community Development Department is in receipt of correspondence from a couple different sources. At the February 1st Commission hearing, a letter was presented by Mr. Bill Grant (Attachment 8). A letter has also been received from the Newcastle Community Association (Attachment 9).

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

At the Planning Commission hearing on February 1, 2011, the Commission directed Staff to provide its recommendations relating to the access options under consideration. As directed, Staff's recommendations are provided below:

1. Comparison of Alternative 4 and Alternative 5 – After review of the issues associated with Alternatives 4 and 5 (as described above and in the attached information), City Staff would recommend Alternative 4 for the following reasons:

- Alternative #5 adds a new signalized intersection on Auburn Folsom Road;
- The addition of a new signalized intersection associated with Alternative #5 affects traffic flow on Auburn Folsom Road and emergency response to south Auburn;
- The 90-degree turn after crossing the UPRR right-of-way impedes circulation for Alternative 5; and
- Emergency response times to the project for Alternative 5 would be slightly higher.

2. Comparison of Alternative 4, Alternative 5 and Herdal Drive – After review of the issues associated with Alternative 4, Alternative 5, and the Herdal Drive access, City Staff recommend the Herdal Drive access for the following reasons:

- The Herdal extension utilizes existing, dedicated right-of-way;
- Condemnation would not required;
- The applicant currently has access rights to Herdal Drive via an existing easement;
- The Herdal access provides the shortest and most direct connection to the project;
- Shortest bridge span;
- Shortest emergency response times;
- No new signalized intersection required on Auburn Folsom Road;
- Fewer services/infrastructure affected;
- Fewest police issues;
- Least impact on City maintenance;
- Least costly alternative;
- Fewest environmental impacts; and
- CEQA review is complete.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Site Access Alternatives Map – January 10, 2010
2. Site Access Summary memo by Ubora Engineering dated January 27, 2011
3. Fire Department memo by Chief D'Ambrogi dated February 7, 2011
4. Police Department memo by Chief Harris dated February 4, 2011
5. Public Works Department Memo dated February 8, 2011
6. Alternative 4 Photo Sim
7. Alternative 5 Photo Sim
8. Bill Grant Letter – received February 1, 2011
9. Newcastle Community Association Letter dated January 8, 2011

EXHIBITS

A. Site Access Alternatives Map – January 27, 2011
B. Project Area Slope Map with Access Alternatives – February 8, 2011
C. Localized Slope Map with Access Alternatives – February 8, 2011
D. Road Profile – Alternative 4
E. Road Profile – Alternative 5
F. Road Profile – Herdal Drive